

**RESEARCH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION COMMITTEE**

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS**

**UW-Superior Yellowjacket Union – Great Room**

**Meeting Minutes – Thursday, October 10, 2019**

**Superior, Wisconsin**

Regent Robert Atwell called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. Regents Cris Peterson, Eve Hall, Becky Lezow, and Torrey Tiedeman were present. Regent Atwell provided an opportunity for Regents to declare any conflicts of interest; none were stated.

**a. Approval of the minutes of the July 11, 2019 meeting.**

On a motion by Regent Lezow and seconded by Regent Peterson, the minutes of the July 11, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.

**b. UW-Superior: Small but Mighty Influence with Industry, Research and Workforce Development.**

Chancellor Wachter introduced Dr. Daniel Rust, Assistant Professor in the School of Business and Economics and a researcher in the Transportation and Logistics Research Center. Dr. Rust highlighted the benefit of required internships for Transportation and Logistics majors. He described how a quality innovative internship program is developed while providing added value for students, faculty and companies. The average internship is three months long. He outlined lessons learned from the internship program. Key is the need for students to be prepared before working with the company. T&L interns must be juniors or seniors, must attend a preparation seminar, and complete at least one key introductory class.

Dr. Matt TenEyck shared how UW-Superior offers testing services to developers of new technologies and tools for ballast water treatment. Its researchers work with global companies and international maritime organizations seeking certification for ballast water filtration systems that prevent microscopic invasive species from inhabiting the Great Lakes. The group has tested 70 technologies to-date and generates \$1.4 million annually in private, state, and federal funding that supports the testing program. Additionally, each year up to 10 students are employed by the research unit. In some cases, they travel internationally to test ballast water installations.

Regent Atwell asked when awareness of the importance of ballast water monitoring first became apparent in the Great Lakes region. Dr. TenEyck said it began in the 1970s, and science and research outputs have increased steadily in the years since. Looking ahead, Dr. TenEyck pointed out the demand for trained field workers will increase because of the anticipated opening of pristine Arctic shipping channels.

During discussion following the presentation, UW-Whitewater Chancellor Dwight Watson asked about federal support for the UW-Superior Water Research Institute project, which comes through the Great Lakes Restoration Project. The research institute also participates in the UW System Freshwater Collaborative.

Regent Tiedeman asked about interaction with campuses other than UW-Milwaukee. The Research Institute works with numerous other academic institutions, and it collaborates with the University of Minnesota-Duluth on boundary water issues. Regent Tiedeman also inquired about industry and research pathways for students. Dr. TenEyck said the freshwater collaborative helps to serve as a path for graduate study. Regent Hall asked about student-to-student exchange possibilities. Dr. TenEyck said the exchanges are presently occurring with UW-Whitewater.

Chairman Atwell inquired about collaboration with other disciplines studying in the Logistics sequence, which is the only one of its kind in the United States. Dr. Rust said this occurs primarily with the Supply Chain discipline. Regent Lezvow inquired about foreign student interest in the program experience. Each year, the Transportation and Logistics unit attracts students from China, Brazil, and several other countries. Regent Lezvow also asked about driverless vehicles. Stewart mentioned that subject is becoming a topic of increased interest.

### **c. Challenges and Opportunities in High-Tech Agriculture.**

Regent Cris Peterson provided background on what it takes to succeed as a dairy farmer in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Her Four Cubs Farm operates the largest robotic milking system in Wisconsin. She additionally related the story of a disastrous fire on the farm in 2017 and the subsequent rebuilding effort within five months through a harsh Wisconsin winter. Regent Becky Lezvow additionally shared some of her personal experiences as a Wisconsin dairy farmer. Regents Lezvow and Peterson both highlighted the 24/7 aspects of the dairy operation, and that it represents a total family commitment.

Regent Hall asked about the next generation's interest in inheriting the business. Both Regents Peterson and Lezvow indicated this is not a given and that

continued success takes dedication and perseverance, particularly with several back-to-back challenging years economically.

Regent Atwell acknowledged the stress of the difficult economic conditions for state farmers in general and all across the rural regions of Wisconsin. Regent Levsow pointed out the dairy segment represents a \$43 billion impact to the state and that the agricultural sector in total represents a \$140 billion impact. The committee agreed that trends in farming will remain a critical topic for future study.

**d. UWIN – Northwest Wisconsin Regional Internship Initiative for Students at UW-Eau Claire, UW-River Falls, and UW-Stout.**

Rebecca Deschane and Steve Jahn described the value of building robust, regional partnerships such as UWIN and outlined lessons learned since the program’s launch. Additionally, they highlighted future plans to foster new internship opportunities for students and prospective employers and pointed out internships are becoming an increasingly important tool for career preparation. Ms. Deschane said the push to increase internship availability aligns with the UW System 2020 Forward Strategic plan, which sets an aspirational goal for each student to experience at least two high-impact practices before graduation.

Ms. Deschane said about 85 percent of Wisconsin students who graduate from a UW campus remain in Wisconsin. She expects this percentage to increase over time as additional internship opportunities become available. Mr. Jahn highlighted the collaborative aspects of the effort across the 10-county Momentum West region and noted the program has quickly expanded with support from Career Services offices on all three campuses. UWIN utilizes a simple web portal for employer access.

With regard to lessons learned, Mr. Jahn said the UWIN interface strives to “keep it simple” for small employers—those with 20 employees or less. He said small businesses represent the greatest area of opportunity, because many of them today do not hire interns. Ms. Deschane previewed a new series of UW System internship instructional modules for employers. These helpful tools will be introduced on-line. In closing, Regent Atwell said he believes employer attitudes are changing, with more of them becoming interested in having interns.

**e. The meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.**